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## Moderator's Page

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## Moderator's Page

The Catholic physician today is in a position of unique importance unsurpassed in many years. In a society so imbued with a mentality for killing, he should very definitely lead the way in opposition to this philosophy which so violates the ideals of his profession.

Violence resulting in death has become the popular theme for recreation in movies and television; it is the technique applied for social convenience in the abortion clinic; it is employed for "security reasons" in military expediency, and is used as a means of personal gain (sometimes very little monetary gain) on the streets of most large cities. Latter incidents can be verified in the daily newspapers reporting stories of break-ins, purse snatching and knifings of innocent citizens who have become pawns and victims of hoodlums. With the murders of the late Kennedy brothers, Martin Luther King and other prominent citizens, the rate of killing has escalated tremendously. In the larger cities of this country, crimes are recorded as often as once every eighteen minutes.

Physicians bear witness to all of this daily in the emergency rooms of the hospitals they serve. While some patients are guilty of wrongdoing, most are innocent victims who have violated neither a civil nor moral code.

At present, there is considerable publicity for euthanasia. In the public mind, it is equivalent to "mercy killing" — that is, the direct killing of an individual patient for some "good" reason. One of the standard reasons is to prevent pain and suffering. The "Living Wills," on the other hand, are documents relieving the hospital and physician of the need to use extraordinary means to prolong life unnecessarily. They do not extend to the realm of direct, positive euthanasia, although there is apprehension among many that this, indeed, will take place.

The physician — gifted to heal, offer comfort, show compassion always to those in need — would be shocked at the action of a physician who would directly kill a patient, even at the patient's request. All of his training is directed at supporting life, not toward the use of any means to directly extinguish it. His role is that of healer, not executioner; his success is in curing, not in killing.

In showing compassion for those who are suffering, all physicians — but particularly the Catholic physician — should see all men as their

brothers. The physician treats each person with great care and concern, always mindful of the worth of each individual human life.

Through his faith, the Catholic physician sees God as the Author of Life and as such, the One Who reserves the sole right to terminate a life. What more noble service could be rendered than to assist the Creator in the preservation of human life? Indeed, anything less would rob the physician of his commitment and dedication and would debase the ideals of his chosen vocation.

**Msgr. Dino J. Lorenzetti**

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George Blaha, M.D.

## **Dr. George Blaha Dies in Casablanca**

The medical community, and the NFCPG in particular, have been saddened by the death of Dr. George C. Blaha. While attending the African Medical Seminar of the Illinois State Medical Society he suffered a massive coronary occlusion in his hotel room at Casablanca, Morocco, on March 15, 1975 at the age of 62.

Dr. Blaha was known to many as the man who personified Cook County Hospital and its Resident-Intern Alumni Association, and to Catholic physicians as an active member and President-elect of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds.

A native Chicagoan, he attended Harper Elementary School and Lindbloom High School. In 1934 he was graduated from the University